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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*
SUBJECT: Your Talk with the Indian Foreign Minister--4:15 p.m.
Thursday, July 10

Secretary Rogers invited Dinesh Singh to the US (Washington, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cape Kennedy, New York) because:

--He is Mrs. Gandhi's closest confidant.

--He has in the past seemed sharply anti-American and pro-Soviet without real understanding of our approach to world problems. Although he has appeared more balanced since he became Foreign Minister in February, a wide range of contacts in the US may hopefully give him a more concrete picture of us.

In addition to seeing you and Secretary Rogers, he will see Secretaries Stans and Hardin and lunch with several members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I will see him again at breakfast Friday.

Ambassador Jung will accompany Singh, and I will be there.

Of course, you will want to express pleasure in his visit here and your forthcoming visit to India. Beyond that, I am giving you a fuller than usual talking paper since this is something of a dress rehearsal for your talk with Mrs. Gandhi. A short sketch of Singh is attached.

It is fair to assume that what you say to him will reach the Soviets, so he is a good channel for conveying your current thoughts.

Main Points to Stress

1. We want peace in Vietnam--but we want a peace that will genuinely protect the right of the South Vietnamese to decide on their own future. We are not going to desert them.

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SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

2. We believe other Asian nations have an interest in that kind of settlement.
3. Beyond Vietnam, we will play a role as a counter to China, but we would like to leave Asian security arrangements to Asians.
4. We are committed to economic development in Asia generally and India specifically.
5. We accept Indian non-alignment but urge caution on Soviet intentions.
6. We would like to see cordial relations between India and Pakistan, but we regard that as an Indian and Pakistani problem. For our part, we will try to maintain good relations with both, recognizing India's importance and position vis-a-vis Communist China.

Subjects He May Raise

1. Future of Asia. The Indians have become increasingly interested in Southeast Asia and will want to talk about both the current Vietnam situation--especially the pace of negotiations and our strategy--and our longer-term intentions in Asia. Indians are ambivalent on our future role in Asia. They believe Asians should solve Asian problems, yet they face an aggressive China and want assurance of great power support in an emergency as well as substantial economic help. They want outside help, yet they quickly took their distance from Brezhnev's June 7 proposal for Asian collective security arrangements. [Brezhnev told the International Communist Conference in just one sentence of a long speech: "We are of the opinion that the course of events is also putting on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia." He did not elaborate and so far we have had no official clarification.]

On Vietnam negotiations, you might say:

--We want a settlement in Vietnam, but it has to be one that will really permit the South Vietnamese to arrange their own future. We are serious that whatever arrangements are made not just be a convenient cover for our withdrawal but provide workable machinery to guarantee their freedom of choice.

SECRET

-- We are negotiating in good faith and are not pursuing a military solution, but if negotiations are to succeed, the time has come for the other side to take them seriously. Your eight points are about as far as you can go, and the South Vietnamese will probably come up with a political program.

-- We have made serious concessions: the end of bombing, the withdrawal of 25,000 combat troops, the offer of simultaneous troop withdrawal, the proposal of free elections with international supervision.

-- It is hard to know what more we can do, but still we have had no response. The other side goes on trying to work on our public opinion. They cannot expect us to hold still for that.

-- As for an Indian role in Southeast Asia, we believe free Asian nations have a direct interest in the kind of settlement we are working for. The proposal for an international supervisory body in the May 14 speech was framed to leave open as many options as possible. While its makeup is subject to agreement between the parties in Paris, we do not rule out the possibility that the ICC or its present members might play a role. However, we are frank to say that we continue to be disappointed at the performance of the ICC in Vietnam.

On our longer term role in Asia, you might say:

-- Our basic position is that Asians should decide how to arrange their long-term security. We have an immediate stake in Southeast Asia, but we regard the longer term future of the region primarily an Asian concern.

-- Within that framework, we intend to live up to the commitments we have made, and we will continue to play a role as an external counterweight to Communist military power and subversion. We will participate where we can make a difference. We are willing to cooperate in reasonable Asian initiatives where we are asked, but we do not expect to be the sole contributor.

-- We will place special emphasis on helping Asian nations strengthen their economies and social fabrics. In the near future, the principal threat will be more from external exploitation of internal instability than from overt military power.

SECRET

On Brezhnev's proposal, there are two schools of thought. One in the State Department sees this as an opportunity to cooperate with the USSR which we should welcome. My own view is that whatever the Soviets do in Asia they will do for their own reasons. It will require no formal cooperation from us. In any case, even Soviet officials are unclear about what Brezhnev had in mind, and the Indians immediately took their distance from the idea because they want to keep the great powers at arms length in Asia. You might say:

-- We do not know exactly what the Soviets have in mind. We have asked without receiving a clear response, except an indication that they seem interested in some system for containing Communist China.

-- Aside from suggesting a greater Soviet role, it is difficult for us to see much substance in the proposal unless -- and it seems unlikely -- the Soviets are offering to commit their power to protect Asian nations against Chinese attack.

-- But in the absence of a concrete Soviet proposal, there is not much we can say about the idea except to restate our view that these are issues for Asians to decide.

-- What is his analysis?

2. U.S. in South Asia. More specifically, Singh will be interested in our posture toward South Asia and the Indian Ocean vis-a-vis China and the USSR. India sees Communist China as the main threat, and the US and USSR as major counters. India accepts substantial Soviet military and economic aid, but the Soviet suppression of Czechoslovakia and arms aid to Pakistan have deepened Indian suspicion of long-term Soviet intentions. But while the Indians are interested in our continued presence, they are leery of any military presence. (For instance, we are establishing a small refueling and communications facility on the British-held island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, and Singh has objected.)

You might say:

-- We understand India's desire (like ours) to maintain cordial relations with the USSR. We conduct our Soviet relations unemotionally on the basis of our evaluation of our interests. We remember Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine. We know that 85% of the military equipment ranged against us in Vietnam is Soviet. At the same time, we are willing to make agreements provided they are real settlements and not shams. We are prepared to make this a new era of reconciliation provided the Soviets respect our requirements, especially in Vietnam.

SECRET

SECRET

- 5 -

-- The same principles apply to Communist China, We see no reason to distinguish between two countries having the same ideology. We were willing to continue the Warsaw talks. A tactical shift in position toward India seems more likely than toward us, though we would welcome Chinese flexibility and would respond to it. To the extent that they threaten the interests of others, we take that into account.

-- The Sino-Soviet dispute adds a new element to the international situation. It is essentially a competition between two great powers on geopolitical grounds. We will consult our own interests and continue to stand aloof. If the Soviets are worried, we are prepared to participate in real settlements of outstanding issues. We shall take the same stance toward China.

-- We respect India's formal policy of non-alignment, assuming it is a pragmatic reflection of India's basic interests.

-- As for our own role in South Asia, we remain firmly committed to continue as much support for India's economic development as Congress will allow. You have asked Congress for \$380 million for India -- almost double last year's appropriation.

-- If he mentions our Indian Ocean facility, you might say this is just a small transit facility -- not a base -- and then ask him to comment on Soviet naval activities in the Indian Ocean. (The Soviets have approached the Indians regarding use of Indian port facilities. Singh may say our move will increase Soviet pressure, but you can say you see no reason why India should feel obligated, since it has not granted the facilities to us. If he says our move will increase great power rivalry in the area, you could reply that the Soviets are already there; the problem is not to keep them out but to restrict their presence. That is up to India.)

3. India-Pak relations. Singh may want to discuss Indo-Pakistani relations and will probably express India's objections to any change in our military supply policy that would increase sales of military equipment to Pakistan. Our present policy embargoes the sale of lethal equipment to either India or Pakistan but permits sale of non-lethal equipment (e.g. trucks, communications) and spare parts for previously supplied lethal equipment. We also stand willing to release US-controlled lethal end items in the hands of third countries willing to sell to India or Pakistan. The Indians would like to buy from us, but they would forego that if it meant our selling to Pakistan.

SECRET

SECRET

- 6 -

You might say:

--We want good relations with both India and Pakistan. We would like to see an improvement of relations between them, but we see little we can do in this regard. We recognize that India is the major power on the subcontinent.

--You are re-examining the present military supply policy and will hear arguments on both sides during your trip. [This is on the NSC agenda for after your return.]

--We recognize that both India and Pakistan have legitimate defense needs, and we are not eager to see either totally dependent on the USSR or Communist China.

--The Congress strongly opposes our selling arms to countries where it would contribute to an arms race or divert resources from economic development. Congressional restrictions written into our Foreign Aid Law seriously restrict our freedom of decision.

--For the moment, however, you are studying the problem.

4. Middle East. Singh has just come from two days in Cairo, and he may wish to share his impressions of Egyptian thinking and to explore our intentions.

You might say:

--You would be interested in his impression of whether Nasser is willing and able to make the kind of peace that would help bring permanent stability to the Middle East. We are concerned that perhaps the UAR is relying on the US-USSR or the four-power talks to make peace for them.

--We are not clear whether the Soviets want to live with the present dangerous situation or whether they intend to engage their prestige to get a permanent settlement. The purpose of our current talks with the Soviets is to probe their intentions.

--Our further purpose in these talks is to see whether we can establish the basic framework of a realistic negotiation between the Middle Eastern parties most immediately involved. We know we can not make peace for them.

SECRET

SECRET

- 7 -

--One aspect of our position is commonly misrepresented and we want to be sure the Indians understand our position: We know there can be no peace without Israeli withdrawal. Since neither the 1949 Armistice Agreement nor the November 1967 Security Council Resolution prescribes where Israel's borders should be, we believe these must be finally defined by agreement between the parties. We do not believe rectifications in the pre-war lines should be excluded but in our view any changes should be confined to those required for mutual security and should not reflect the weight of conquest.

Points to Avoid

There are no serious points to skirt, but you might want to keep these sensitivities in mind:

1. Singh, like many Indians, is reluctant to see the USSR as a threat. While there is no harm in stating our view, there is little to be gained from a fruitless discussion on this point if Singh seems obdurate.
2. While Indians recognize their need for our economic help, they do not like to be reminded of their dependence on aid.
3. Of course, there is no point in prolonging a discussion of who is more at fault in the India-Pakistani dispute.

SECRET